



Prattville Utility Construction LLC

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket Number 13-5
Rural Broadband Experiments - Statement of Interest

March 22, 2014

Dear Ms. Dortch,

We are a utility contractor known as Prattville Utility Construction LLC based in Autauga county. Our company has been installing last mile networks since 2003. Most of our communication projects to date have consisted of building copper and fiber optic based networks for BellSouth, AT&T, Charter, Knolegy, and others. We have also built WANs for many of the state community colleges and universities. We are interested in taking part in the rural broadband project to provide broadband internet to our area since the current offerings are not suitable by todays standards. Currently, AT&T collects \$75 per month for telephone service with unlimited long distance. They also provide DSL internet service to subscribers in our area with actual bandwidth speeds of 1.5/0.3Mbps for an another \$25. Many people in the rural parts of the county can not afford to pay \$100 dollars or more for internet and telephone services. Moreover, some of the other types of services such as satellite internet and mobile broadband are even more expensive, and have heavily restrictive fair use policies and monthly usage caps. Therefore, we feel that these services are not viable alternatives. We know that we can provide a more accessible, affordable, and efficient service to the area that will be more beneficial to the people who live here than the current offerings.

Proposed Service Area

Our proposed service areas in Autauga county include all census blocks in the following census track IDs: 1001020900 (Marbury area), 1001021000 (Billingsley area), 1001021100 (Autaugaville area). A number of locations that could be served include: 10 volunteer fire departments distributed throughout the county, 6 public schools, and the Tenaska power plant. There also are numerous small businesses in the rural areas of Autauga county that would benefit. The towers could also be used to expand the public safety communications network to allow law enforcement and emergency services access the internet in the more remote areas of the county. In regards to the schools, five of the six rural campuses are serviced by a shared Gigabit WAN and the last campus in Billingsley has two T1 lines totaling 3 Mb/s. These services are currently provided by Charter and are 80% to 90% funded by the USAC with an annual cost of \$200,000 or more. Once our network is built we could provide a superior service at half the cost.

Broadband Technology and Pricing

The broadband technology we plan to use to service these areas is a fixed wireless network that will consist of eight towers arranged in two concentric circles with the inner circle connected with the outer one with "spokes". This topology will provide a resilient connection if any one connection goes down. The towers will be connected with directional antennas transmitting on a 5Ghz frequency with a bandwidth of 1Gb/s. This technology would provide the same performance as a fiber backhaul without the high cost of installing miles of cable. Our customer premises equipment will include a wireless transmitter and receiver to connect to our towers along with a solar panel and battery backup so the system can function indefinitely in the event of a power grid failure. This setup is also more resilient than conventional systems since there is no physical cable to get damaged by excavation. Our VoIP system will be based on the open source Asterisk platform or Microsoft Lync, both of which will support E-911 and video calling. There will be three different tiers of bandwidth offered at 5/1 Mb/s, 10/2 Mb/s, and 15/3 Mb/s. The planned prices for these tiers are \$25, \$55, and \$75, respectively. VoIP services will be offered as an additional add on to consumers for \$30. Although those will be our packages we will be able to provide service up to 100 Mb/s or 1Gb/s if requested with a configurable split between up and down speed. Also, there will be no monthly data cap or throttling. We strongly believe that everyone should get the bandwidth they pay for at all hours of the day.

Local Government Participation

Currently, we do not have state, local, or tribal government participation for this project although it will be actively pursued with the towns of Billingsley and Autaugaville.

Required Funding

The backhaul network is estimated to require funds of \$240,000 for tower construction and networking equipment. The cost of the customer premise equipment is estimated to be \$130,000 for support of an initial 150 subscribers, which would provide the revenue to purchase more CPE for subsequent customers. The equipment for CALEA compliance is \$15,000. Subscriber management software is estimated at \$15,000 and office equipment at \$10,000. The customer VoIP phone system is estimated at \$75,000. Operating expenses are estimated to cost \$25,000 per month. So we estimate our project would require \$725,000 to build the network and support the operation of it for 9 months. Within that time we plan to have it constructed and enough customers to sustain the project. We do not expect a need for continued funding unless it takes longer to achieve the market penetration required for the project to sustain itself. If that is the case, another \$280,000 would cover the operations for 6 months and the equipment for 150 more subscribers.

Thank you for your time,
Stephan King
Prattville Utility Construction